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No Sacred Cows.

Currently aggravating the consistent opponents of all forms of Congressional inquiry, and especially those which deal with communist infiltration is a proposal of the Senate committee headed by Senator McCarthy for investigating the Central Intelligence Agency.

One reason cited for opposition is that top secrets would be revealed to the enemy if such a probe were undertaken. This would be a valid objection, if the fact-finding effort were to be an open airing. Such a procedure would be out of the question, even though communist agents probably have already gleaned all of the important information they desire; certainly these representatives of the Kremlin have had free sway for a long time.

The weakness of the Central Intelligence Agency is brushed aside by those who oppose an inquiry under any circumstances, principally because they hate Senator McCarthy. Failure of this clearing house for espionage to give the warning which would have averted American military disaster in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium during world war two has never been explained, nor the fumble in the case of the atomic spies, nor the lack of information concerning the intervention of Red China in the Korean war. And there have been more recent instances of less serious proportions when the effectiveness of the agency has been openly questioned.

The fact that Allen Dulles, brother of the Secretary of State, now heads Central Intelligence may warrant greater confidence, but it cannot be too strongly stressed that here is one branch of the government service in which inefficiency can produce sudden and complete catastrophe. The public is therefore entitled to know how well or how poorly it functions—within the limits of prudent investigation.

By the same token it is appropriate that the House committee on un-American activities has granted a hearing to J. B. Matthews, former investigator for the McCarthy committee, whose departure from federal service followed a too-generalized charge that Protestant ministers comprise the largest single group supporting the communist apparatus in the United States today.

What Matthews has to say concerning specific instances of clergymen supporting communism should clear the atmosphere and draw the line that needs to be drawn in the light of his original accusation. Any intelligent American who follows the Kremlin line needs to have his head examined, and this is especially true of clergymen. Whether they go on leftist tangents through ignorance or a mere desire to be different is immaterial; the effect is the same as if they knowingly and wholeheartedly embraced the communist line.

Whether a secret government agency, clergy, press, radio, labor or any other segment is involved, the question of national security comes first. There can be no sacred cows.